

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-10 IO-13
L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /094 W
-----111988 251108Z /11

R 250804Z MAY 78
FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2865
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0283

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM NATO MBFR
SUBJ: MBFR: SUMMARY OF INFORMAL SESSION OF MAY 23, 1978 WITH
EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN THE MAY 23, 1978 INFORMAL SESSION OF
THE VIENNA TALKS, THE ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED BY THE
NETHERLANDS, UK AND US REPS AND THE EAST BY SOVIET DEPREP
SHUSTOV, POLISH REP STRULAK, AND GDR REP OESER. SHUSTOV STATED
THAT SOVIET REP TARASOV CONTINUED ILL AND WAS STILL IN MOSCOW.
MILITARY ADVISORS WERE ALSO PRESENT.

2. DURING THE SESSION, EASTERN REPS MADE GENERAL STATEMENTS
ABOUT THE WILLINGNESS OF WARSAW PACT PARTICIPANTS TO MOVE TO
AN AGREEMENT, ON THE EASTERN APPROACH TO REDUCTIONS, AND ON THE
STATUS OF THE DATA DISCUSSION. THEY DID NOT ADDRESS THE WESTERN
INITIATIVE EXCEPT TO SAY THAT IT CONTINUED UNDER STUDY AND DID
NOT GO INTO SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF DATA. WESTERN REPS MADE GENERAL
PRESENTATION ON THE NEED TO FOCUS ON GROUND FORCES AND THE NEED
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TO RESOLVE DATA DISCREPANCY, AND ASKED A SERIES OF CLEAN-UP
QUESTIONS CONCERNING ALLOCATION OF EASTERN GROUND FORCE PERSONNEL
BETWEEN THE TWO CATEGORIES OF MAJOR FORMATIONS AND OTHERS.
THEY REMINDED THE EAST THAT THE EAST HAD NOT GIVEN A RESPONSE
TO EARLIER WESTERN QUESTIONS ABOUT POLISH TERRITORIALS.

3. UK REP PRESENTED WESTERN CASE FOR FOCUSING ON MANPOWER

AND THE NEED FOR AN OUTCOME WHICH DEALT WITH EXISTING DISPARITIES IN GROUND FORCES. SHUSTOV MADE GENERAL PRESENTATION WITH QUOTES FROM BREZHNEV, GROMYKO AND WARSAW PACT CONFERENCE IN SOFIA. HE SAID THE EAST ATTACHED PRIORITY TO CURBING THE ARMS RACE AND THE VIENNA TALKS HAD AN IMPORTANT ROLE ON THIS. THE EAST WAS WILLING TO MAKE ITS FULL CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUCCESS OF THE TALKS. WESTERN PARTICIPANTS SHOULD NOT SPEAK OF REDUCTIONS TO REACH PARITY, SINCE APPROXIMATE PARITY ALREADY EXISTED, BUT RATHER OF THE REDUCTION OF THE EXISTING PARITY TO A LOWER LEVEL. THE MAIN REASON FOR THE LACK OF PROGRESS THUS FAR WAS THE WESTERN EFFORT TO GAIN UNILATERAL MILITARY ADVANTAGE. THIS ATTEMPT WAS IN VAIN. THE EAST WAS STILL STUDYING THE NEW WESTERN PROPOSALS.

4. NETHERLANDS REP RETORTED TO EASTERN CRITICISM OF THE WESTERN POSITION ON DATA. THE LARGE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN FIGURES ON EASTERN MILITARY MANPOWER IN THE REDUCTION AREA WAS A CENTRAL PRACTICAL PROBLEM IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS. THE WEST COULD NOT SIMPLY IGNORE THE EXISTING DISCREPANCY. THE REASONS FOR THE DISCREPANCY MUST BE CLARIFIED BEFORE THERE COULD BE AGREEMENT ON DATA. WITHOUT AGREEMENT ON DATA, THERE COULD BE NO AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS AND LIMITATIONS. IT WAS THEREFORE DIRECTLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE EAST AS WELL AS THE WEST, IF THE EAST WISHED A REDUCTION AGREEMENT, TO WORK IN A PRACTICAL AND BUSINESSLIKE WAY TO DETERMINE THE SOURCES OF THE DISCREPANCY.

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5. POLISH REP SAID THE EASTERN POSITION WAS BASED ON THE EXISTENCE OF APPROXIMATE PARITY BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA. DESPITE THIS, THE WEST WANTED THE EAST TO REDUCE THREE TIMES MORE MANPOWER THAN THE WEST. ALL PARTICIPANTS SHOULD UNDERTAKE CLEAR AND EQUIVALENT REDUCTION COMMITMENTS. THE EAST OBJECTED TO A SITUATION WHERE SOME PARTICIPANTS UNDERTOOK CLEAR COMMITMENTS WHERE OTHERS WOULD BE ACCEPTING UNSPECIFIED AND FLUID OBLIGATIONS. THE MOST EQUITABLE AND EFFECTIVE METHOD OF REDUCTIONS WAS EQUAL PERCENTAGE OR EQUAL NUMBER REDUCTIONS FROM THE PRESENT PARITY TO PARITY AT A LOWER LEVEL. ALL PARTICIPANTS SHOULD FOLLOW THE SAME METHOD OF FORCE REDUCTIONS, REDUCTIONS BY UNITS OF COMPARABLE NATURE. THE EAST WAS ALSO CONVINCED THAT REDUCTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE ARMAMENTS. THE TENDENCY TO LIMIT REDUCTION OF ARMED FORCES TO GROUND FORCE MANPOWER ALONE WAS COMPLETELY WRONG AND UNFOUNDED.

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6. US REP ASKED SEVERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT ALLOCATION OF
EASTERN GROUND FORCE MANPOWER BETWEEN MAJOR FORMATIONS AND
OTHERS. HE REMINDED EASTERN REPS THAT THEY HAD NOT YET ANSWERED
THE QUESTIONS WHICH THE WEST HAD RAISED AT THE END OF THE PREVIOUS
ROUND ON POLISH TERRITORIAL PERSONNEL.

7. GDR REP SAID THE EAST HAD NOT FORGOTTEN THE QUESTIONS ABOUT
THE POLES AND WOULD ANSWER THEM SUBSEQUENTLY AS WELL AS
QUESTIONS RAISED ON THE PRESENT OCCASION. HE WISHED TO DEAL WITH
DATA IN MORE GENERAL TERMS IN THE PRESENT SESSION. AGREEMENT ON
NUMBERS WAS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO DETERMINE REDUCTIONS. FOR THIS
REASON THE EAST WAS WILLING TO CONTINUE THE DATA DISCUSSION.
THE EXCHANGE OF DATA HAD SHOWN THE EXISTENCE OF A SITUATION OF
NEAR EQUALITY IN MILITARY MANPOWER BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES;
THERE WERE NO DISPARITIES. WHY DID THE WEST KEEP DEMANDING NEW
FIGURES IF THE WEST DID NOT WANT TO DEPART BY EVEN ONE STEP
FROM ITS EXCESSIVE ASSESSMENT OF EASTERN FORCES? SO FAR, THE
WEST HAD NOT ACCEPTED THE EASTERN PROPOSAL FOR EXCHANGE OF DATA
ON MANNING LEVELS. FOR FRUITFUL DATA DISCUSSION, WESTERN
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REPS WOULD HAVE TO GO BEYOND REPEATING THEIR CONTENTIONS AND
INSTEAD THOROUGHLY EXPLAIN THEIR ASSESSMENT OF EASTERN FORCES
AND SHOW WHAT IT WAS BASED ON. THE WEST APPARENTLY STILL HOPED
THROUGH ITS ILLUSORY DISPARITY APPROACH TO BE ABLE TO CONVINCE

THE EAST THAT THE LATTER SHOULD ACCEPT ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS.
THIS WAS A VAIN HOPE BECAUSE THE EAST WOULD NOT AGREE TO
ASYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS.

8. AT THE END OF THE INFORMAL SESSION, UK REP RAISED THE
ISSUE OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE TALKS AND THE ACTION BY THE
GDR REP FOLLOWING THE MAY 18 PLENARY IN DISTRIBUTING TO THE PRESS
A WRITTEN PRESS STATEMENT CONSISTING ALMOST ENTIRELY OF QUOTES
FROM GDR REP'S OWN STATEMENT AS JUST DELIVERED IN PLENARY
SESSION. IN RESPONSE, GDR REP SAID THE EAST CONTINUED TO AGREE
ON CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE CLAIMED THAT HIS REMARKS
HAD NOT REVEALED ANYTHING CONFIDENTIAL ON DETAILS OF PRESENT
POSITIONS, IN DISTINCTION TO LEAKS IN THE WESTERN PRESS PRIOR
TO PRESENTATION OF THE WESTERN INITIATIVE. END SUMMARY.RESOR

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